

REMARKS

Per the interview with the Examiner on 03/20/02, claims 1, 9, 16, 21, 25 and 29 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-30 remain pending in the application. No new matter has been added by the amendment. Entry of the foregoing amendment is requested.

The actions taken are in the interest of expediting prosecution and with no intention of surrendering any range of equivalents to which Applicants would otherwise be entitled in view of the prior art. Further, no amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless Applicant has argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references. No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. Moreover, the amendment or cancellation of claims herein is without prejudice to pursuing claims of different scope by way of continuing Application.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 9-13, 16-18 and 21-30 were rejected under 35.U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kostreski et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,729,549, hereinafter Kostreski et al.) in view of Ozkan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,946,045, hereinafter Ozkan et al.). The claims have been amended to overcome this rejection. Applicants' respectfully traverse the rejection and request reconsideration.

An important potential feature of Applicants' invention is providing to an analog wireline device with the capability of playing audio and/or video obtained from multiple content sources having different encoding methods. These sources include, for example, local storage devices such as CD-ROM, DVD or hard disk, internet or intranet sources and various computer applications that produce audio and/or video content. The independent claims have been amended so that all claims recite receiving an audio and/or video signal from a plurality of sources and identifying a bitstream comprising audio and/or video data "based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources." Support for the additional language in the claims can be found on page 9, lines 10-19 and page 11, lines 24-32 of the specification.

The claimed invention teaches data from a plurality of sources where the data is based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources.

*The cited references do not teach or suggest this feature. Kostreski et al. teaches a specific encoding method and a broadband network providing substantially concurrent distribution of multiple RF channels from separately located transmitters or sources which broadcast the same multi-channel multi-program signal (column 1, lines 16-20, column 11, lines 58-63). The “sources” in Kostreski et al. refer to signals from separate transmitters, which are simultaneously broadcasting the same program, where the program is from a single source. Kostreski et al. teaches encoding using “a” standardized digitization and compression technique, such as MPEG “or” DIGICIPHER, with the preferred embodiment being MPEG II. Clearly, Kostreski et al. teaches the use of only one encoding method and not a plurality of encoding methods. Throughout the patent application, Kostreski et al. teaches the use of the MPEG encoding method only, which is illustrated in FIG. 8 where MPEG audio and video decoders (129 and 131) are used. Kostreski et al. does not teach or suggest data from a plurality of sources where the data is based on a plurality of encoding methods *corresponding* to the plurality of sources.*

Ozkan et al. teaches a method of formatting and decoding video data in multiple encoding formats from a single source by forming a program guide to associate a channel map with an encoding format. The program guide and video data are incorporated into the video datastream and the datastream is provided to an output channel (abstract). Ozkan et al. further teaches that the channel map and program guide information permit identification of data packets, that comprise individual programs in different broadcast encoding formats from the single source video datastream, and permit decoding at the receiving end of the packets. The different channel mappings are associated with different broadcast encoding formats based on the available transmission bandwidth for a particular encoding format (column 6, lines 45-55). Variable encoding formats are used to selectively provide enhanced levels of broadcast signal noise immunity for a single source signal. Ozkan et al. does not teach or suggest data from a plurality of sources where the data is based on a plurality of encoding methods *corresponding* to a plurality of sources.

Applicants’ respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 9, 16, 21, 25 and 29 as drafted clearly distinguish over the cited art. In particular, neither Kostreski et al. nor Ozkan et al. disclose or teach the use of audio and video *data from a plurality of sources where the data is based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources*. Kostreski et al. and Ozkan et al., individually or in combination, do not

contain at least these features of the applicants' claims 1, 9, 16, 21, 25 and 29, they do not include all of the elements of applicants' independent claims 1, 9, 16, 21, 25 and 29, and therefore cannot anticipate applicants' independent claims. Applicants respectfully submit that there is no suggestion to combine the references, and if they could be properly combined, do not lead to the Applicants' invention, and that any valid combination is merely hindsight reconstruction of Applicants' invention.

Claims 2-8 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 10-15 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 9 and are believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 9.

Claims 17-20 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 16 and are believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 16.

Claims 22-24 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 21 and are believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 21.

Claims 26-28 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 25 and are believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 25.

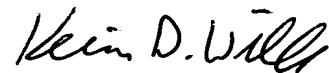
Claim 30 depends directly from claim 29 and is believed to be allowable over the relied on references for at least the same reasons as claim 29.

Summary

Reconsideration is respectfully requested. In view of the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fees necessitated by actions taken herein to Deposit Account 13-4771.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A system for distributing audio content of a digital audio signal to a analog wireline device, comprising:

an audio input interface receiving the digital audio signal from a plurality of sources and identifying an audio bitstream, wherein the audio bitstream comprises audio data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;

an audio decoding unit connected to the audio input interface and decoding the audio bitstream;

an audio digital to analog converter connected to the audio decoding unit and converting the audio bitstream to an analog audio signal; and

an audio output interface connected to the audio digital to analog converter and distributing the analog audio signal to the analog wireline device.

Claim 9 has been amended as follows:

9. (Twice Amended) A system for distributing video content of a digital video signal to a analog wireline device, comprising:

a video input interface receiving the digital video signal from a plurality of sources and identifying a video bitstream, wherein the video bitstream comprises video data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;

a video decoding unit connected to the video input interface and decoding the video bitstream;

a video digital to analog converter connected to the video decoding unit and converting the video bitstream to an analog video signal; and

a video output interface connected to the video digital to analog converter and distributing the analog video signal to the analog wireline device.

Claim 16 has been amended as follows:

16. (Twice Amended) A system for distributing audio and video content of a digital audio signal and a digital video signal to an analog wireline device, comprising:

- an audio input interface receiving the digital audio signal from a plurality of sources and identifying an audio bitstream, wherein the audio bitstream comprises audio data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;
- an audio decoding unit connected to the audio input interface and decoding the audio bitstream;
- an audio digital to analog converter connected to the audio decoding unit and converting the audio bitstream to an analog audio signal;
- an audio output interface connected to the audio digital to analog converter and distributing the analog audio signal to the analog wireline device;
- a video input interface receiving the digital video signal from the plurality of sources and identifying a video bitstream, wherein the video bitstream comprises video data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;
- a video decoding unit connected to the video input interface and decoding the video bitstream;
- a video digital to analog converter connected to the video decoding unit and converting the video bitstream to an analog video signal;
- a video output interface connected to the video digital to analog converter and distributing the analog video signal to the television; and
- a synchronization unit connected to the audio output interface and the video output interface and synchronizing the analog audio signal and the analog video signal.

Claim 21 has been amended as follows:

21. (Twice Amended) A method for distributing audio content of a digital audio signal to an analog wireline device, comprising the steps of:

- receiving the digital audio signal from a plurality of sources and identifying an audio bitstream, wherein the audio bitstream comprises audio data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;
- decoding the audio bitstream;
- converting the audio bitstream to an analog audio signal; and
- distributing the analog audio signal to the analog wireline device.

Claim 25 has been amended as follows:

25. (Twice Amended) A method for distributing video content of a digital video signal to an analog wireline device, comprising the steps of:

receiving the digital video signal from a plurality of sources and identifying a video bitstream, wherein the video bitstream comprises video data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;

decoding the video bitstream;

converting the video bitstream to an analog video signal; and

distributing the analog video signal to the analog wireline device.

Claim 29 has been amended as follows:

29. (Twice Amended) A method for distributing audio and video content of a digital audio signal and a digital video signal to an analog wireline device, comprising the steps of:

receiving the digital audio signal from a plurality of sources and identifying an audio bitstream, wherein the audio bitstream comprises audio data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;

decoding the audio bitstream;

converting the audio bitstream to an analog audio signal;

receiving the digital video signal from a plurality of sources and identifying a video bitstream, wherein the video bitstream comprises video data based on a plurality of encoding methods corresponding to the plurality of sources;

decoding the video bitstream;

converting the video bitstream to an analog video signal; and

distributing the analog audio signal and the analog video signal to the analog wireline device.